

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-05
OES-07 OMB-01 HEW-06 MED-03 L-03 /082 W
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R 061009Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3803
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
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AMEMBASSY MADRID
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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR
SUBJECT: AVAILABILITY OF LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS
TO AMERICANS TRAVELLING ABROAD

REF: (A) STATE 255976; (B) LONDON 2881

1. FOLLOWING DEFINITIVE REPLY HAS BEEN RECEIVED TO OUR
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SUBMISSION TO HMG OF QUESTIONS IN REF A. DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOME OFFICE HAVE RE-
PRODUCED THESE NOTES FOR DISTRIBUTION TO AMCIT INQUIRER

"NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF PARTICIPANTS IN
METHADONE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES WHO INTEND TO VISIT
THE UNITED KINGDOM.

IMPORTATION OF METHADONE INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM:

(1) METHADONE IS ONE OF THE DRUGS SUBJECT TO INTERNATIONAL CONTROL UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS 1961. AS BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM ARE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION THE EXPORT AND IMPORT OF THE DRUG ARE CONTROLLED IN BOTH COUNTRIES BY LICENSE. IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IMPORT LICENSES ARE NORMALLY GRANTED ONLY IN RESPECT OF COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS, AND NOT TO ENABLE INDIVIDUALS TO IMPORT THEIR PERSONAL SUPPLIES, EVEN IF THEY HAVE OBTAINED THEM LEGITIMATELY IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY. SEVERE PENALTIES ARE ATTACHED TO OFFENCES ARISING OUT OF ANY UNAUTHORIZED ATTEMPT TO IMPORT THE DRUG.

AVAILABILITY OF METHADONE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM:

(2) METHADONE IS AVAILABLE IN ALL ITS MAIN FORMS BUT MAY ONLY BE SUPPLIED OR PRESCRIBED BY A DOCTOR WHO IS REGISTERED TO PRACTICE MEDICINE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, (I.E., ONE WHOSE NAME APPEARS IN THE BRITISH MEDICAL REGISTER) AND WHO IS ALSO RESIDENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. A PHARMACIST MAY NOT SUPPLY THE DRUG AGAINST A PRESCRIPTION GIVEN BY A DOCTOR WHOSE NAME DOES NOT

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APPEAR IN THAT REGISTER.

MEDICAL FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO OVERSEAS VISITORS:

(3) THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDES MEDICAL TREATMENT FREE OF CHARGE, AND DISPENSES MEDICINES AT FIXED LOW CHARGES. BUT THIS SERVICE IS INTENDED ONLY FOR PEOPLE ORDINARILY RESIDENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. WHILE VISITORS ARE NOT DENIED EMERGENCY TREATMENT UNDER THE NHS FOR CONDITIONS ARISING IN THIS COUNTRY, THIS CONCESSION DOES NOT IN GENERAL EXTEND TO THE TREATMENT OF PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS, PARTICULARLY WHERE IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE PATIENT WAS AWARE BEFORE COMING THAT HE WOULD BE NEEDING TREATMENT WHILE IN THIS COUNTRY. VISITORS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM WHO SUFFER FROM ANY PRE-EXISTING CONDITION (INCLUDING FOR EXAMPLE DRUG DEPENDENCE) ARE THEREFORE REQUIRED TO MAKE THEIR OWN PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TREATMENT AND THIS WILL NORMALLY INVOLVE PAYING FOR MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS AND FOR ANY DRUGS PRESCRIBED FOR THEIR TREATMENT. WHILST THERE ARE SPECIALIST DRUG DEPENDENCY CLINICS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, ALMOST ALL OF THESE OPERATE WITHIN THE

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AND, AS SUCH, ARE

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PRECLUDED FROM ACCEPTING PATIENTS FROM
OVERSEAS WHO ARE NOT ORDINARILY RESIDENT IN THE UNITED
KINGDOM. IT IS SUGGESTED, THEREFORE, THAT ANY PARTICI-
PANT IN A UNITED STATES METHADONE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME
WHO WISHES TO VISIT THE UNITED KINGDOM SHOULD ASK HIS
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DOCTOR TO MAKE APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS TREATMENT BEFORE HE LEAVES THE UNITED STATES.

(4) THE METHOD OF TREATMENT IN INDIVIDUAL CASES IS DECIDED BY THE DOCTOR CONCERNED. IT MAY INCLUDE A PERIOD WHEN THE PATIENT IS SUPPLIED ON A MAINTENANCE BASIS WITH THE DRUG TO WHICH HE IS ADDICTED OR A SUBSTITUTE BUT THIS WOULD BE ENTIRELY A MATTER OF INDIVIDUAL MEDICAL JUDGMENT. THERE HAS IN RECENT YEARS BEEN A TREND IN THE DRUG TREATMENT CLINICS TO PRESCRIBE METHADONE ON A MAINTENANCE BASIS TO ADDICTS DEPENDENT ON HEROIN OR OTHER NARCOTIC DRUGS. THIS TREND WAS NOT INITIATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BUT BY THE DOCTORS WORKING IN THE DRUG TREATMENT CLINICS.

(5) FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE MEDICAL SERVICES MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF DRUG DEPENDENCE AT KINGSBURY HOUSE, 3 BLACKBURN ROAD, LONDON, NW6, OR FROM THE USA EMBASSY, LONDON.

ENTRY INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM:

(6) ALL CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES ENTERING THE UNITED KINGDOM MUST PRODUCE A VALID NATIONAL PASSPORT. VISITORS ARE REQUIRED TO SATISFY THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER ON ARRIVAL THAT THEY ARE GENUINELY SEEKING ENTRY FOR THE STATED PERIOD OF THEIR VISIT AND CAN, WITHOUT WORKING, SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND ANY DEPENDENTS FOR THIS PERIOD AND MEET THE COST OF THE RETURN OR ONWARD JOURNEY. VISITORS COMING TO STAY WITH RELATIVES OR FRIENDS ARE ALSO TO BE ADMITTED IF THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER IS SATISFIED THAT NO MORE THAN A VISIT IS INTENDED.

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TENDED AND THAT THE SUPPORT AVAILABLE IS ADEQUATE. HOWEVER, THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER HAS POWER TO REFUSE LEAVE TO ENTER IF NOT SATISFIED ON THE PRECEDING POINTS AND IN PARTICULAR WHERE THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE PASSENGER'S REAL PURPOSE IS TO TAKE EMPLOYMENT OR THAT HE MAY BECOME A CHARGE ON PUBLIC FUNDS IF ADMITTED. ADMISSION WILL NORMALLY BE FOR A STAY OF 6 MONTHS, BUT A LONGER OR SHORTER PERIOD MAY BE APPROPRIATE. ADMISSION AS A VISITOR DOES NOT AUTHORISE THE TAKING OF EMPLOYMENT FOR WHICH A WORK PERMIT IS REQUIRED. VISITORS MAY BE ADMITTED FOR PRIVATE MEDICAL TREATMENT

AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE, AND THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER WILL WISH TO SEE EVIDENCE THAT ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR CONSULTATION OR TREATMENT, AND BE SATISFIED THAT A VISITOR'S MEANS ARE SUFFICIENT TO PAY FOR SUCH TREATMENT. FOR THIS PURPOSE THE PORT MEDICAL INSPECTOR MAY BE ASKED TO GIVE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY COST. A VISITOR DETECTED IN AN ATTEMPT TO IMPORT METHADONE WITHOUT AUTHORITY MAY BE REFUSED ADMISSION."

2. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES POINTS OUT THAT THE ABOVE NOTES DO NOT PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE UK POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES CONVENTION. THE UK HAS NOT RATIFIED THIS CONVENTION BUT A NUMBER OF THE SUBSTANCES SPECIFIED IN THE CONVENTION ARE ALREADY SUBJECT TO CONTROL UNDER THE MISUSE OF DRUG ACT 1971. BY REFERENCE TO THE SCHEDULES OF THE PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES CONVENTION THE CURRENT POSITION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IS AS FOLLOWS:

SCHEDULE 1: ALL THOSE SUBSTANCES ARE CONTROLLED AND LICENSES TO POSSESS THEM ARE ISSUED, GENERALLY SPEAKING, ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

SCHEDULE 2: ALL SUBSTANCES ARE CONTROLLED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PHENCYCLIDINE. THIS DRUG IS NOT GENERALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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AVAILABLE BUT VERY SMALL QUANTITIES HAVE BEEN IMPORTED UNDER SPECIAL LICENSE OVER THE YEARS FOR VETERINARY PURPOSES ONLY ALMOST ENTIRELY FOR USE IN ZOOS AND SAFARI PARKS. IT IS NOT AVAILABLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC EVEN ON PRESCRIPTION.

SCHEDULE 3: NONE OF THOSE SUBSTANCES IS CONTROLLED UNDER THE MISUSE OF DRUGS LEGISLATION, BUT PREPARATION

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ARE ALL PRESCRIPTION ONLY.

SCHEDULE 4: NONE OF THOSE SUBSTANCES IS CONTROLLED
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF METHAQUALONE AND PIPRADROL. THE
REMAINDER ARE ALL PRESCRIPTION ONLY MEDICINES. METHA-
QUALONE IS VERY STRICTLY CONTROLLED - MORE SO THAN
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MORPHINE.

DRUGS SPECIFIED IN SCHEDULES 1 AND 2 TO THE SINGLE
CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS 1961 ARE SUBJECT TO FULL
CONTROL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND (LIKE METHADONE)
THEIR IMPORT IS CONTROLLED BY LICENSE AND LICENSES
ARE NORMALLY GRANTED ONLY IN RESPECT OF COMMERCIAL
TRANSACTIONS, AND NOT TO ENABLE INDIVIDUALS TO IMPORT
THEIR PERSONAL SUPPLIES. THE POSSESSION OF THESE
DRUGS IS PROHIBITED UNLESS AUTHORISED BY REGULATIONS -
AS IN THE CASE OF MEDICAL, DENTAL OR VETERINARY PRACTI-
TIONERS REGISTERED TO PRACTICE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM -

UNLESS SUPPLIED AGAINST A PRESCRIPTION GIVEN BY A
DOCTOR REGISTERED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM OR UNLESS THE
HOLDER IS LICENSED. THE IMPORTATION OF PREPARATIONS
SPECIFIED IN ARTICLE 3 TO THE SINGLE CONVENTION RE-
QUIRES AN IMPORT LICENSE AND THESE PREPARATIONS ARE
AVAILABLE ONLY ON PRESCRIPTION WITHIN THE UK.

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Message Attributes

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